

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON NAACP HURRICANE KATRINA RELIEF EFFORTS

NAACP RESPONSE

Hurricane Katrina made landfall between in late August 2005. It has been categorized as one of the most catastrophic disasters in our country. On September 2, 2005, the NAACP launched a *Disaster Relief Fund*. The focus of the NAACP's Disaster Relief efforts was three-fold: 1) to provide immediate assistance to those most in need; 2) to ensure the *equitable* distribution of money and resources from Federal, state and local government agencies and other non-governmental organizations; and, 3) to ensure the *equitable* reconstruction of affected areas and families.

NAACP DISASTER RELIEF EFFORT

On September 5, 2005, Adora Obi Nweze, NAACP Florida State Conference President, was appointed National Disaster Relief Coordinator. The NAACP immediately established a National Disaster Relief Command Center in Baltimore, Maryland, four "on-the-ground" command centers in Houston, TX, Baton Rouge, LA, Jackson, MS, and Fort Walton, FL and a distribution center in Biloxi, MS. Through these centers, the NAACP coordinated the receipt and delivery of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other relief resources. The NAACP has collected over \$1.9 million in donations to provide direct grant assistance, to return families to permanent housing opportunities within the Gulf Coast region, and to provide educational grants and supplies. This amount includes \$8,000 in donations from several NAACP state conferences and \$54,225 from NAACP branches across the country.

Working in concert with NAACP units across the nation, the Department of Justice's Office of Community Relations Services, FEMA, and the America Red Cross, the NAACP's Disaster Relief Centers coordinated food, transportation, housing, health and educational resources and information to over 3,000 individuals from the Gulf Coast region. Through the NAACP Command Centers and collaborative partnerships, the Association distributed more than six tractor-trailers of food and three truckloads of clothing in the Gulf Coast region, including more than 500 pounds of food, 100 cases of water, 7 cases of paper goods, 100 sets of sheets and towels and 150 large bags of clothes. Through a partnership with Skyline Public Works, the NAACP successfully connected 93 individuals with their families.

NAACP CALL TO ACTION

On September 14, 2005, the NAACP convened a coalition of senior leadership from various civic organizations, corporations, universities, and activist organizations at Howard University to develop a call to action centered on addressing the more immediate concerns of those most affected by the Hurricane Katrina disaster. The coalition requested that the President as well as federal, state, and local agencies immediately respond to the following eight critical areas of concern:

- Ensuring affected families' immediate and long-term right of return to the Gulf Coast region.
- Establishment of a Family Reconstruction Fund (estimated at \$100 billion) for employment training, unemployment assistance, and school placement.
- Ensuring that local residents have first choice at reconstruction jobs and contracts.
- Providing substantive physical and mental health assistance.
- Ensuring on-going legal, economic and voting-rights protection.
- Oversight/monitoring of FEMA, American Red Cross, and Salvation Army distribution of resources.
- Developing action plan to secure the environment for future generations.
- Developing comprehensive strategy to address poverty crisis in America.

LEGISLATIVE POLICY

On November 2, 2005, all 42 members of the Congressional Black Caucus in the US House of Representatives introduced H.R. 4197, the *Hurricane Katrina Recovery, Reclamation, Restoration, Reconstruction and Reunion Act of 2005*, which the NAACP fully supports.

The Hurricane Katrina relief effort will be one of the greatest reconstruction and humanitarian efforts in the history of our nation. The NAACP must maintain an effective presence in ensuring the equitable reconstruction of the Gulf Coast region. The NAACP has been and should remain committed to ensuring the equitable distribution of resources until the last family is reunited and the last home is rebuilt.